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Paul G. Bretscher

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_bretscherp@csl.edu

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THE THEOLOGY OF
THE PSALMS OF DAVID

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Old Testament Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
Paul G. Bretscher

June, 1945

Approved by:

George C. Schick
Alex H. Gumbert

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THE THEOLOGY OF THE PSALMS OF DAVID

(Outline)

Controlling Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to reconstruct out of the poetry of David his chief theological thought.

I. The Psalms of David reveal his knowledge of God.

- A. Man by nature knows certain things about God.
 - 1. Nature proves to him that God exists.
 - 2. It reveals God's power, majesty, and glory.
 - 3. It reveals God's providential goodness.
 - 4. The lives of men reveal God's justice.
 - 5. The testimony of nature is universal and inescapable.
 - 6. Men who still deny God are held accountable.
- B. The Trinity of God is revealed in the Psalms.
 - 1. God is one.
 - 2. Messiah is God.
 - 3. The Holy Spirit is God.
- C. Many attributes of God are revealed in the Psalms.
 - 1. God is eternal.
 - 2. God is omniscient.
 - 3. God is omnipresent.
 - 4. God is omnipotent.
 - 5. God is supreme.
 - 6. God is holy.
 - 7. God is just.
 - 8. God is merciful and gracious.
 - 9. God is faithful.
- D. The Psalms reveal God as Creator and Preserver of all things.
 - 1. God has created heaven and earth.
 - 2. God has made man and given him supremacy over all creation.
 - 3. God preserves all that He has made.
 - 4. God preserves particularly the righteous.
- E. The Psalms reveal the angels.
 - 1. The angels are God's servants.
 - 2. There is also an evil angel, Satan.

II. The Psalms of David reveal his knowledge of man and sin.

- A. Man is depraved by sin.
 - 1. This depravity is universal in extent.
 - 2. This depravity is total in degree.
 - 3. Sin makes man a fool.
 - 4. Man delights in sin.
 - 5. He exalts himself and debases God.
 - 6. Depraved man does nothing good.

- B. The life of sinful man is only vanity, ending in death.
 - 1. Man loves life.
 - 2. Yet he knows his life to be frail and vain.
 - 3. Death is inevitable and inescapable.
 - 4. Death is the consequence of his sin.
 - 5. The keys of life and death are in God's hand.
- C. Man's sin makes God a God of wrath.
 - 1. God's holiness is incompatible with sin.
 - 2. Man knows this, and fears God's wrath.

III. The Psalms of David reveal his knowledge of God's grace.

- A. Man's hope for salvation rests solely on God.
 - 1. It rests on God's grace.
 - 2. It rests on God's faithfulness.
 - 3. It rests on God's righteousness.
 - 4. It rests on God in the fulness of His Deity.
- B. Salvation is a matter of God's righteous judgment.
 - 1. God is a righteous Judge.
 - 2. To be saved, man must conform to God's standard of righteousness.
 - 3. Since man is sinful, he has no such righteousness in himself. If he is to be saved he must receive it from God. God gives it as a gift.
 - 4. The essence of such righteousness is forgiveness of sin.
 - 5. Man appropriates this righteousness, in contrition, by faith.
 - 6. Those who rest their entire hope for salvation on God are saved.
 - 7. Men who have such faith are called righteous.
 - 8. Man does not earn righteousness by works.
 - a. Certain passages seem to indicate that he does.
 - b. But this is impossible for sinful man.
 - c. Righteousness is a matter of the heart.
 - d. The wicked are damned, ultimately, for lack of faith.
 - 9. Possessing the righteousness of faith, man can appeal to his own righteousness for salvation.
- C. The Messiah fills the gap between the holiness of God and the forgiveness of sin.
 - 1. David longed for the Messiah's coming.
 - 2. The Messiah is both God and Man.
 - 3. The Messiah is to do the will of God.
 - a. He is to be a Preacher of righteousness.
 - b. He is to be a Priest, offering Himself for the sins of man.

4. Many details of the passion are foretold in the Psalms.
 5. Psalm 69 shows that the suffering of the Messiah is vicarious, for man.
 6. The Messiah is to rise from death, and rule at the right hand of God, King of power, grace, and glory.
- D. God reveals Himself as a God of redeeming grace in His Word.
1. Knowledge of God's grace is possible only through the revealed Word.
 2. The Word reveals the forgiveness of sin.
 3. The Word reveals the Messiah.
 4. The Word reveals the way of salvation.
 5. The Word is a means of converting men.
 6. The Law is a guide to sanctification.
 7. The Word is unalterably true.
 8. The believer praises the Word, and loves to hear it.
 9. The believer preaches the Word to others.
- E. Salvation is universal in extent.
1. David's chief interest is in Israel.
 2. Yet he pictures God as Lord of all nations.
 3. All nations will yet turn to Him.
- F. God has in eternity elected certain people as His own.

IV. The Psalms of David reveal the doctrine of Sanctification.

- A. Sanctification of life is founded on faith.
1. Faith and works are intimately related.
 2. Faith is fundamental to all good works
 3. Sanctification depends on cleanness of heart.
 4. Sanctification is wrought by God.
 5. Yet it is the believer who does the good works.
- B. Sanctification is manifest in the believer's life, attitudes, and actions.
1. The believer commits himself completely to God.
 2. The believer separates himself from sinners and from sin.
 3. The believer's life is a life of joy.
 4. The joy of the believer bursts forth into praise.
 5. The believer prays to God.
- C. The believer faces trials and afflictions in his life.
1. Afflictions are sent by God.
 2. David describes his afflictions in terms of "enemies."
 3. The believer reacts in various ways to affliction.

- a. He may compare his state with the prosperity of the wicked.
 - b. He may affirm his innocence.
 - c. Usually he feels the righteous displeasure of God, and turns to God for forgiveness and deliverance.
 - 4. God is aware of the afflictions of the believer, hears his prayer, and in mercy delivers him.
 - 5. God sometimes uses means to deliver men.
 - a. He uses "the angel of the Lord".
 - b. He uses the strength of man.
 - D. In the Psalms the concept of love seems to be absent in sanctification.
 - 1. The believer loves God and man.
 - 2. The central idea in the relation of man to man is justice and fairness.
 - E. The cries of the Psalmist for Vengeance on his enemies seem to contradict the New Testament idea of love.
 - 1. The Psalmist and the Messiah utter bitter imprecations on their enemies.
 - 2. The righteous apparently view the destruction of the wicked with sadistic joy.
 - 3. How can we reconcile this with the New Testament?
 - a. The wicked fully deserve such destruction.
 - b. Such destruction serves as a warning to turn men to God.
 - c. David's hatred is not sinful, but righteous indignation.
 - d. We do not know the identity of David's enemies, and therefore cannot pass judgment.
 - e. Not all the imprecations are unconditional.
- V. The Psalms of David reveal the fundamentals of Eschatology.
- A. God is the Judge of mankind.
 - 1. God's throne is always a throne of judgment.
 - 2. There will, however, be a special day of judgment.
 - 3. This final judgment will be universal.
 - 4. The standard of judgment is God's righteousness.
 - 5. Men will be judged according to their works.
 - 6. The righteous will be rewarded, and the wicked destroyed.
 - B. There is a Resurrection of the Body.
 - 1. The Messiah will rise from the dead.
 - 2. All believers will rise to eternal life.
 - 3. The resurrection of the wicked cannot be established on the basis of these Psalms.

- C. The wicked are doomed to hell.
 - 1. Hell is separation from God.
 - 2. Hell is the punishment for sin and for unbelief.
 - 3. The believer regards hell as the worst of all evils.
- D. The believers will go to heaven.
 - 1. The believer longs for heaven.
 - 2. God preserves the believer in faith, and brings him to the goal of heaven.
 - 3. Heaven is life in the presence of God.
 - 4. Heaven is eternal life.
 - 5. In heaven the believer has perfect peace, righteousness, and joy.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE PSALMS OF DAVID

Introduction

This thesis is an attempt to reconstruct from the poetry of David the chief articles of his religious creed.

The presentation of this subject is limited in several ways. In the first place, only those Psalms are included, which are stated in the Hebrew text to have been composed by David. There are 74 of these: Psalms 3-32; 34-41; 51-65; 68-70; 86; 101; 103; 108-110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138-145. Wherever the term "Psalms of David" or merely "Psalms" occurs in this thesis, it is to be understood as referring to these Psalms only, and not to the whole Psalter. In the second place, exegetical niceties have been avoided wherever possible, and no particular effort has been made to develop homiletical applications. Exegetical work was based on the Authorized Version of the Bible, reference being made to the original Hebrew or to commentaries only where a passage presented particular difficulty.

This thesis, therefore, does not thoroughly exhaust the subject in all its ramifications. The interpretation placed upon passages may not in every case be the best. Nor is it certain that every detail of doctrine in these Psalms has been recognized and classified. But as a general overview and classification of David's theology on the basis of these Psalms, this thesis should fulfil its purpose.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE PSALMS OF DAVID

I. God

A. The Natural Knowledge of God

The Psalms of David point out emphatically that every man, by nature, knows of the existence of God. The man who tries to deceive himself into believing that God is not real, or that there is no God, is a fool. Such denial of God is his attempt to still the voice of his conscience, which emphatically tells him that he is a sinner and under the wrath of God.

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good....

Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD. (14,1.4; 53,1.)¹

All of nature reveals God, clearly and inescapably. Not only the fact of His existence, but also many of his attributes are thus evident to man.

1. The location of passages quoted in this thesis is given throughout in parentheses immediately following the passage quoted. All quotations are from the Psalms. 14,1, therefore, means Psalm 14,1, and so forth throughout. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations of the Psalms follow the Authorized Version, also in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge (i.e., knowledge that there is a God). (19,1-2.)

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens....

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man...? (8,1.4-5.)

The sky in these passages becomes to its beholder a preacher of the glory of the God Who created it.

In the mighty forces of nature, in wind, storm, thunder, lightning, and rain, the power and majesty of God are revealed to man, as well as His glory.

Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength....

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.

The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire....

...in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.

The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever. (29,1.3-10. Cf. also 18,7-15.)

In the abundant productiveness of nature for man, God is revealed as a God of provident goodness and mercy. The fields themselves, with their abundant harvests, become a song of praise to God.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills rejoice on every side.

The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing. (65,11-13.)

In God's dealings with men, His judgment and justice are readily discernable.

The LORD is known by the judgment which He executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. (9,16.)

When God has wrought a mighty deliverance for the believer, "All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing." (64,9.)

The testimony which nature thus bears to the existence of God, and to these attributes of God, is universal and inescapable.

There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.... (19,3-4)

They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens;.... (65,8.)

Even babes and sucklings know of God and sing His praise, thus putting His enemies to silence.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. (8,2.)

Men, who, in spite of all this evidence, deny God, are held accountable to Him.

Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up. (28,5.)

B. The Trinity

Monotheism is taken for granted. There is only one God, Jehovah.

For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God? (18,31.)

Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord;

 ... thou art God alone. (86,8.10.)

God is truly One. Yet the Psalms teach clearly of a Messiah, a distinct Person, truly man, but also identified with, and called, God.²

Also the Holy Spirit is identified with Jehovah.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:....
 (139,7-8.)

"Thy spirit" and "thou" are here identified. The same relationship appears in Psalm 51, 10-12:

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

The parallelism of the verse makes "thy presence" and "thy holy spirit" at least interchangeable, if not synonymous.

Thus, the Trinity of God is clearly revealed in the Davidic Psalms.

C. The Attributes of God

Every Psalm treats in some way of the relationship of God to man or of man to God. The description of that relationship is dependent on man's knowledge of what God is and what he is like. Man knows God, and can speak of Him, only

2. The relation of the Messiah to Jehovah is treated fully in the section on Messiah, chap. III, p.

The term "Messiah" is not used of the promised Redeemer in these Psalms. I am using it freely, however, for want of another designation.

in terms of His essential qualities, or attributes. Nine such qualities of God are more or less clearly ascribed to Him in the Psalms under discussion. They are Eternity, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Majesty, Holiness, Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness. To the believer these attributes of God are a source of great comfort; to the unbeliever, only of terror.

God is eternal.

The Lord shall endure for ever. (9,7.)

To Him time means nothing.

...mine age is as nothing before thee:.... (39,5.)

His kingdom is eternal.

Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations. (145,13.)

...the Lord sitteth King for ever. (29,10.)

The Lord is King for ever and ever. (10,16.)

The eternity of God is indicated also by the eternity of His mercy.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him,.... (103,17.)

God does not change.

God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. (55,19.)

The latter half of the verse, in the translation of Smith, reads, "With whom there is no change; yet they fear not God".³ That God does not change is indicated also in

3. J. M. Powis Smith, and Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Complete Bible, p. 528.

Psalm 110,4, "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent,...."

God is omniscient. No action or even thought of man escapes His knowledge.

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.
Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether....

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. (139,1-4.11-12-of 40,9.)

God knows our sin.

O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. (69,5.)

He knows our affliction.

Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. (69,19.)

He knows the attitude of men to Him.

The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. (14,2. of 53,2.)

Man is forced to confess that God's knowledge far surpasses all human thought.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. (139,5.)

God is omnipresent. He is inescapably everywhere.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascent up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. (139,7-10.)

God is omnipotent, all powerful. Though it is nowhere stated in the Psalms of David that He is all powerful, yet this is taken for granted by the very fact that He is God. Nothing is superior to Him. No enemy is so great that God cannot instantly crush him with His right hand.

Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power. (21,13.)

Jehovah is supreme in nature, and uses His power to deliver his children.

In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.

Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it....

The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.

Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. (18,6-8. 13-16. of Psalm 29.)

This is poetry, but it is nevertheless eloquent testimony to the irresistible power of God. Frequently the power of God, wielded on behalf of His children, becomes the object of the believer's praise.

But I will sing of thy power;

... for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy. (59,16-17. of 68, 33-35.)

Inseparable from the concept of the omnipotence of God is that of His majesty. The passage from Psalm 18,

quoted before, could again be quoted here. Jehovah is supreme, "the Highest" (18,13.), the "most High" (9,2.).

The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven:.... (11,4.)

The LORD hath prepared his throne; and his kingdom ruleth over all. (103,19.)

He is the eternal King. (10,16: 29,10.)

He is "the King of glory", "the LORD strong and mighty", the LORD mighty in battle", "the LORD of hosts". (24,7-10.)

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above the earth. (57,5.)

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. (145,3.)

God is holy.

The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

... let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever. (145,17.21b.)

Thou art holy. (22,3.)

God hath spoken in his holiness.... (60,6.)

Any wickedness is totally incompatible with his holiness.

For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with thee. (5,4.)

God therefore, hates sin.

God is angry with the wicked every day. (7,11.)

The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing (i.e. lying) the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man. (5,5-6.)

The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone,.... (11,5-6.)

God is just and righteous in His dealings with men.

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful;
with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;
With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with
the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. (18,25-26.)

And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he
shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.
(9,8. cf. 51,4; 7,11.)

The righteousness of God is made an object of praise.

My tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of
thy praise all the day long. (35,28.)

I will praise the LORD according to his righteous-
ness. (7,17.)

God's righteous judgment is a blessing to the upright.

So that a man shall say, verily there is a reward
for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth
in the earth. (58,11.)

For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his
countenance doth behold the upright. (11,7.)

Therefore the righteous even pray for the execution of his
judgment.

Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself be-
cause of the rage of mine enemies; and awake for me
to the judgment that thou hast commanded....

Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end;
but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the
hearts and reins. (7,6.9.cf. 9,4; 36,10.)

To the wicked, on the other hand, God's justice is a terror,
for it means their destruction.

God judgeth the righteous ("is a righteous judge")⁴
and God is angry with the wicked every day.

If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath
bent his bow, and made it ready.

He hath also prepared for him the instruments of
death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.
(7,11-13. cf. 5,5-6; 6,1; 27,9.)

4. Concordia Bible, Margin.

God's justice is also manifested in His care for the down-trodden and the oppressed.

The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. (103,6)

I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. (140,12. cf. 9,9-10.12-13.18; 10,12-18; 12,5; 14,5-7; 35,9-10; 68,5-6.)

God is merciful.

The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

The LORD is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. (145,8-9.)

Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens;....

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God!....

O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee;.... (36,5.7.10. cf. 54,6; 34,8; 57,10; 31,19; chap. III, Grace.)

God's grace and mercy to man is far beyond human comprehension.

Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. (40,5.)

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. (139,17-18.)

A correlative of God's mercy is His faithfulness, or truth. This means that God is consistently and unchangeably reliable.

Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. (57,10. cf. 108,4; 36,5.)

The faithfulness of God is to the believer a guarantee of His continual grace.

The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me;
thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not
the works of thine own hands.
(138,8. cf. 61,7.)

God is faithful in carrying out His promises.

The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent....
(110,4.)

Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby
thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was
weary. (68,9.)

In prayer the believer therefore often appeals to God's
faithfulness.

Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplica-
tions: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy right-
eousness. (143,1. cf. 69,13.)

Yet God is true and unwavering also in carrying out His
righteous vengeance.

Cut them off in thy truth. (54,5.)

D. Creation and Preservation

Heaven and earth, and all that is in them, have been
created by God.

The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and estab-
lished it upon the floods. (24,1-2.)

Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made
heaven and earth. (124,8.)

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the fir-
mament sheweth his handywork. (19,1.)

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all
the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens....

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained,....
(8,1.3. cf. 65,6.)

God is the creator of all creatures.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;
The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and
whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.
(8,6-8.)

God is also the Creator of man; he brings forth each individual who is born into the world.

But thou art he that took me out of the womb:....
(22,9.)

For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. (139,13.)

Man is created out of dust.

For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. (103,14.)

But his body is a marvelous tribute to the surpassing wisdom of God.

I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.

My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. (139,14-16.)

Man is superior to animals, in that he has reason and understanding, and is a moral creature, capable of instruction in right and wrong.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. (32,8.9.)

Man has body and soul.

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:
my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for
thee.... (63,1.)

Even as God has created all things, so He also continually preserves the things He has made.

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. (65, 9-11.)

O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. (36,6.)

The LORD is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works....

The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. (145,9.15-16.)

A special guarantee of preservation is given the believers.

Trust in the LORD and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed....

They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied....

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. (37,3.19.25.)

O fear the LORD, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him.

The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing. (34,9-10. cf. 144,12-15; 68,19; 145,20; 103,5.)

E. The Angels⁵

The Davidic Psalms say nothing of the origin or creation

5. The discussion of the angels is included at this point for the sake of convenience. It does not fit logically into any part of the outline.

of the angels, but their primary characteristics and functions are clearly defined. The angels are real, moral, intelligent, individual beings. The clearest and most complete description of the angels is found in Psalm 103,20-21.

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

From this passage it is clear that the angels are of great strength; that they are many in number; that they serve as God's army, His servants, by whom He accomplishes His purposes; and that they praise God. David speaks also of a special angel, "the angel of the Lord".⁶ This angel is the guardian of the righteous.

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (34,7.)

He serves also as a minister of vengeance upon the wicked.

... let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase them.

Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them. (35,4-6.)

The devil is mentioned only once.

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. (109,6.)

Hebrew here is יָצָוּ , "adversary." Satan in this passage is pictured as permitted and commissioned by God to take complete control over the actions of one who has hardened

6. Conservative exegetes have identified this angel with Christ.

himself against God. Although this is the only passage in which Satan is thus named,⁷ the concept of the devil as tempter and tormentor is apparent frequently when David speaks of his enemies.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate. (143,3-4.)

The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. (37,32.)⁸

7. Verb forms of $\sqrt{7} \sqrt{2} \sqrt{4}$ appear also in verses 4, 20, and 29, of this Psalm, and in 38,20.

8. See the full discussion of David's enemies under the problem of Affliction, Chap. IV.

II. Man and Sin

A. The Depravity of Man

Of the holy state of man before the fall into sin, and of the fall itself, no mention is made in the Davidic Psalms, unless such a reference is found in Psalm 17, 15.

... I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

In this passage the Hebrew for "likeness" is תְּצַלְחֵנִי; in Genesis 1.26, the words בְּצַלְמֵנוּ and תְּצַלְחֵנִי are used. In spite of this divergence, Psalm 17, 15. can hardly be interpreted otherwise than as an expression of the believer's hope for a restoration of the image of God in him.

Though these Psalms have next to nothing to say regarding man in his former state of holiness, they are full of the doctrine of man's depravity. The depravity of man is universal in extent.

The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD. (14, 2-4. cf. 53, 2-4.)

... in thy sight shall no man living be justified. (143, 2.)

Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. (12, 1.)

Man is depraved from the moment of his birth, yes, even from

his conception in the womb.

The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. (58,3.)

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. (51,5.)

Not only is depravity universal in extent; it is also total in degree. Each individual is full of sin, thoroughly permeated by it, so that no part of him is clean.

For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness;.... (5,9.)

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.

For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness....

For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease; and there is no soundness in my flesh. (38,3-5.7.)

So depraved is man that he does not even know and understand the extent of his own sin.

Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. (19,12.)

He is completely in the power of sin, completely incapable of overcoming.

For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me. (40,12.)

Iniquities prevail against me:.... (65,3.)

Behold he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. (7,14.)

Sin makes man a fool.

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works.... Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?.... (14,1.4.)

... he hath left off to be wise.... (38,3.)

The wicked....

... like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;
Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers,
charming never so wisely. (58,3-5.)

Far from recognizing his evil state, and struggling
against it, man by nature delights in sin, gives himself over
to sin completely, loves it, seeks it, and boasts himself in it.

O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory
into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after
leasing (lying)? (4,2.)

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and
blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.
(10,3.)

They search out iniquities; they accomplish a dili-
gent search: both the inward thought of every one of
them, and the heart, is deep. (64,4.)

... they delight in lies:.... (62,4.)

Why boapest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty
man?....

Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying more
than to speak righteousness....

Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength;
but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and
strengthened himself in his wickedness.
(52,1.3.7.)

Sin is not simply an outward manifestation of evil; it pro-
ceeds from within, from the heart.

Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the
the violence of your hands in the earth. (58,2.)

Which imagine mischiefs in their heart;.... (140,2.
cf. 64,6.)

The primary manifestation of man's depravity is his
pride in himself, and with it, haughty rebellion against,
denial and defiance of, God.

They only consult to cast him down from his ex-
cellency:.... 62,4a.)

The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:

Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail: our lips are our own: who is Lord over us? (12,3-4.)

The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. (36,1-2.)

Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear? (59,7.)

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. (all his thoughts are, There is no God....)⁹

He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved; for I shall never be in adversity....

He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it....

Wherefore doth the wicked condemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it. (10,4.6.11.13.)

The wicked scorn even the Messiah.

All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. (22,7-8. cf. 14,1.2.4; 53,1.2.4; 54,3; 52,7; 3,2; 4,6; 86,14.)

In his natural state man can do nothing good.

... there is none that doeth good....

They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (14,1.3.)

... he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.

He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good.... (36,3-4.)

Any good that he does do proceeds from a deceitful, treacherous, and hypocritical heart, and is no credit to him whatsoever.

9. Concordia Bible, Margin.

... they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. (62,4b.)

For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company....

The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords. (52,12-14.21.)

Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speaking peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts. (28,3.)

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. (12,2.)

B. The Vanity of Life. Death.

Man loves life, greatly desires it, and places a high value upon it.

What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? (34,12.)

Long life is a great blessing of God.

Thou wilt prolong the king's life; and his years as many generations. (61,6.)

He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever. (21,4.)

In lauding God's grace, David can think of no higher praise than to assert its supremacy over life.

Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. (63,3.)

The Psalmist prays to God for the preservation of his life on the interesting ground that in death he would be unable

to praise God.

For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks? (6,5.)

What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth? (30,9.)

Nevertheless, man is constantly confronted with the knowledge, that his life is frail, temporary, nothing but vanity, and may at any moment be snuffed out.

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquited in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. (39,4-6.)

Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. (62,9.)

For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. (103,14-16.)

Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth. (141,7. cf. 37,1-2.7-10.)

The inevitable and inescapable lot of every man is death.

... none can keep alive his own soul. (22,29.)

Death is the greatest of all evils. Even the believers abhor it.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me. (18,4-5.)

My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. (55,4.)

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more. (39,13.)

I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel. (31,12.)

Deliverance from death is God's greatest blessing; He alone can effect such deliverance.

He that is our God is the God of salvation: and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues (deliverance) from death. (68,20.)

... thou that liftest me up from the gates of death. (9,13b.)

O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. (30,3.)

Death is the wages of sin, the consequence of man's wickedness and rebellion against God.

The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate (held guilty). (34,16.21.)

Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them....

But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days;.... (55,15.23.)

Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me, therefore, ye bloody men.

For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. (139,19-20.)

That God holds the keys of life and death in His almighty hand, is evident from most of the passages quoted in this section. Just as deliverance from death rests solely with God, so also the infliction of death is a matter of God's

judgment alone. If I die, it is because "thou hast brought me into the dust of death". (22,15.) If I am saved from death, the reason is that "great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell".

(86,13.) "For with thee is the fountain of life...." (36,9.)

C. The Wrath of God because of Sin

In connection with man and his depravity, the holiness of God, discussed in Chapter I, under the attributes of God, takes on its full significance. The passages quoted there clearly show the incompatibility of any evil with the holy nature of God. Nowhere in these Psalms, perhaps nowhere in all of Scripture, can a clearer statement of this truth be found than Psalm 5,4-5.

For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

Every sin is a direct violation of the holiness of God, "against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight...". (51,4.) God is holy. God does not condone sin. God and sin are absolute contradictories. Therefore God hates the sinner. Therefore the sinner cannot stand before God.

Man knows that he is sinful, that God is holy, and that he therefore cannot stand before God. He is afraid.

There were they in great fear:.... (14,5.)

Psalms 14 and 53 point out that this fear is the cause of man's denial of God. The believer also trembles before God

because of his sin. But whereas the conscience of the unbeliever drives him to deny God and rebel against Him, the conscience of the believer drives him to repent, and to confess his sin, and to turn to God for his salvation.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger: neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.

For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.

I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly: I go mourning all the day long.

For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease; and there is no soundness in my flesh....

For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin....

Make haste to help me, O LORD, of my salvation.
(38,1-7. 18.22. cf. 6,2-4; 25,7.11.16; 27,9; 31,9-10.22; 32,3-6; 39-8-12; 41,4; 51,1-14; 143,3-4.6-7.)

III. Grace

Nowhere in the Davidic Psalms do we find a clear definition, comparable to the great passages on Justification in the Epistles of Paul, of the doctrine that man is saved by the grace of God alone, through faith, without works of any kind. Certain passages, on the contrary seem to teach the grossest form of work righteousness, certainly so when taken out of their context, or when viewed independently of the rest of the Psalter.¹⁰ Careful and unbiased examination of all the passages dealing with man's salvation, however, reveals the perfect harmony between these Psalms and the New Testament, on the matter of salvation.

A. The Hope of Salvation.

Man's hope for salvation rests solely on God,--the God Who is gracious, merciful, good, longsuffering, full of compassion, full of lovingkindness.

... according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD. (25,7b.)

For thou, Lord art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee....

But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. (86,5.15.)

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. (51,1.)

10. Cf. p. 35 ff.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. (103,8-13. cf. 6,2-4; 13,5; 63,3; 103,1-2; 138,2.6-8; 139,17-18; 145,8.)

God has revealed Himself to man as a God of mercy.

He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

The LORD is merciful and gracious.... (103,7-8. cf. Ex 34,6-7.)

Man rests his hope for salvation also on the faithfulness and truth of God.

Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old. (25,6.)

Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. (31,5.)

If, as has been shown, man is sinful and God is holy, it would be a strange paradox for man to rest his hope for salvation on God's righteousness. To be consistent, man must appeal to God.

Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. (143,2.)

And yet, very strangely, the Psalmist does appeal also to God's righteousness for his salvation.

... deliver me in thy righteousness. (31,1.)

... for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble. (143,11.)

Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness;.... (35,24.)

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. (51,14.)

By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation;.... (65,5a.)

How it is possible for a man who has no righteousness of his own, yet to be declared righteous by a righteous God, is the great mystery of revealed religion. The solution which the Davidic Psalms give is presented in this chapter.¹¹ But the mystery remains.

From the passages quoted in the preceeding paragraphs, it is clear that the salvation of man depends not simply on one attribute of God, but on God in the fulness of His Deity. All His attributes enter into the salvation picture. In Psalm 40,10-11, we have a composite picture. Salvation is ascribed to the righteousness and faithfulness of God, as well as to His mercy and grace.

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

In passages in which the appeal for salvation is to God's name, this truth is also recognized; for the name of God is nothing more than God in His total aspect, as He has revealed Himself to man.

For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great. (25,11.)

11. Cf. under Messiah, Chap. III, C.

For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore
for thy Name's sake lead me, and guide me. (31,3.)

Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake:.... (143,11.)

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of
righteousness for his name's sake. (23,3.)

B. Salvation, a Matter of God's Righteous Judgment

God is a righteous Judge. This implies a standard of holiness against the background of which God views the conduct of men. It implies the inevitable condemnation and punishment of all that does not conform; and the reward and defense of all that does.

The LORD shall judge the people; judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.

... the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.
My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

God judgeth the righteous (is a righteous judge)¹²
and God is angry with the wicked every day. (7,8-11.)

But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. (9,8-9. cf. vv. 4.16.19.)

For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright. (11,7.)

... the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. (19,9. cf. 26, 1; 36,24; 51,4; 58,11; 101,1; 103,6. 110,5-6; 143,2.)

In order to be saved, man must conform to God's standard of righteousness. That standard, as we have seen, is the holiness of God. (5,4-5.) To meet such a standard man must be perfect, spotless, without sin.

12. Concordia Bible, Margin.

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness;.... (15,1-2.)

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.... (17,15.)

Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;... (24,3-4.)

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. (37,37.)

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee. (25,21.)

The necessity of being righteous in the eyes of God finds further confirmation in many passages which contrast the salvation of the righteous with the destruction of the wicked.

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears, are open unto their cry.

The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth...

Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate (guilty).¹³

The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate (guilty).¹³ (34,15-16; 21-22. cf. 7,10-11; 68,1-3.)

Since every man is sinful, ¹⁴ no man can hope to meet in even the least degree the standard of God's holiness. If he is to be righteous, that righteousness must be wrought for him by God, and be given him as a free gift. The Psalms clearly show that this is what happens; God is the source of righteousness and salvation of men.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness:.... (4,1.)

13. Concordia Bible, Margin.

14. Cf. Chap. II.

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the noonday. (37,6.)

He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. (24,5.)

For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. (36,9.)

Salvation belongeth unto the LORD:....(3,8.)

O God of my salvation. (25,5; 27,9; 51,14.)

He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues (deliverance) from death. (68,20.)

The essence of this righteousness, which God bestows upon man, and upon which man is dependent for his salvation, is the forgiveness of sin. A great variety of terms and expressions are used to describe this process, by which God removes the evil in man, thus enabling man to stand again in His holy presence.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile....

I said, I will confess my transgression unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. (32,1.2.5.)

Have mercy upon me O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin....

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow....

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God;....

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,.... (51,1-2.7. 9.10.14.)

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction:....

He will not always hide: neither will he keep his

anger for ever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities....

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (103,3-4. 9-10. 12.)

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions:....

... pardon mine iniquity;....

... and forgive all my sins. (25,7.11.18.)

Enter not into judgment with thy servant:.... (143,2.)

The LORD will not... condemn him when he is judged. (37,33.)

The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate (guilty)¹⁵ (34,22. cf. 19,14; 31,1.5; 41,4; 65,3; 86,5.)¹⁶

How then, does man receive this forgiveness of sins and salvation from God? It is obvious that not all men are thus saved, for the righteous are not repeatedly contrasted with the wicked. The difference is not between Israel and the Gentiles, for the Gentiles too will be saved,¹⁷ (cf. chap. III, E.) and not even all of Israel find salvation.¹⁸ Nor is the difference between men, for, as we have seen, all are sinners, and even the righteous has to cry, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." (143,2.) The Psalms show clearly that man receives righteousness, forgiveness, and salvation,

15. Concordia Bible, Margin.

16. I am omitting for the moment, the discussion of the problem, how it is possible for a holy God to forgive sins. This matter will be treated in the section on Messiah, chap. III, C.

17. Cf. chap. III, E.

18. Cf. 15, 12ff. A familiar, trusted friend, no doubt of Israel, betrayed David.

when he is truly contrite, confesses his sin, and places his entire confidence for salvation on the forgiving grace of God. In a few cases, this entire picture is painted in a single Psalm. The best example is Psalm 32:

Contrition: When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. (32,2-3.)

Confession: I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; (32,5a.)

Forgiveness: and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. (32,5b.)

Faith: Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. (32,10.)

Imputed
Righteousness: Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart. (32,11.)

In Psalm 69, we find the entire concept in a single verse, verse 32:

The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

The humble are the meek and contrite, who no longer, in sinful pride, set up themselves as gods. Those who seek God are those who believe. These people have life and salvation.

Psalm 22,26, is a close parallel:

The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. (Cf. 34,18-22; 25; 38; 37,9-11; 69,29-33.)

Contrition, or true humility and sorrow over sin, is necessary, not because it is a good work upon which the Lord

looks with favor, but because it is the only condition of the heart which can turn to God for grace.

Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

The meek will be guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way. (25,8-9.)

The "sinners" and the "meek" are singled out for guidance and for teaching, because only they are teachable.

Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off. (138,6.)

With this in mind, the great passages on contrition are clear.

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. (34,18.)

Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice....

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (51,8.17.)

The man with the "broken heart" and "contrite spirit" readily and spontaneously confesses his sins to God.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:.... (51,3-4.)

I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee. (41,4.)

For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.

For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. (38,17-18.)

The contrite sinner now places his whole faith in the promises of mercy, given him by God.

I have fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. (27,13.)

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore

the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. (36,7.)

But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever. I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints. (52,8-9.)

And now, LORD, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. (39,7. cf. 7,1; 25,5; 38,15; 70,4; 131,3; 141,8; 143,8.)

Those who thus rest their hope for salvation entirely upon God have that salvation.

But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. (13,5.)

Shew thy marvelous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. (17,7.)

Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! (31,19.)

For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name. (61,5.)

For thou, Lord, art Good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. (86,5; cf. 9,10; 31,1.6.14-17; 34,7-9; 69,6.36; 37,34.39-40.)

Men who have this faith, though they are sinners, are called righteous.

The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory. (64-10.)

But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD:.....

... he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. (37,39-40.)

But let all those that put their trust in thee

rejoice:....let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous:....
(5,11-12. cf. 11,1-2; 34,21; 32,11; 37,32; 55,22; 68,3.)

Other designations are also used to describe this state of man's reconciliation with God. Man is now spiritually alive:

... in his favour is life:.... (30,5.)

He is perfect, and upright:

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright:....
(37,37. cf. 32,11; 19,13; 11,2.)

He is kind, benevolent, pious toward God ךָּוֶן :

... and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints. (52,9b. cf. 12,1; 31,23; 86,2; 32,6; 37,28; 145,10.)

He is a man set apart by God, holy, קֹדֶשׁ :

O fear the LORD, ye his saints:.... (34,9. cf. 16,3.)

He is faithful firm, steadfast אֱמֻנָה : (cf. 12,1;

31,23.) He is God's servant. (34,22; 143,2.) He is clothed in the beautiful garments of holiness. (110,3.)

Man does not earn righteousness in the sight of God by his works. Certain passages, seem to teach that he does, that salvation is dependent on man's works, and not on faith, at least not on faith alone.

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle, who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart...

... He that doeth these things shall never be moved. (15,1-2; 55,7)

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity.

Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.
(18,20-26.)

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

And see if there by any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (139,23-24. of. 7,8-11; 19,11; 24,3-6; 26,1-3.6.11-12; 41,12.)

It is immediately evident, however, since all these passages are spoken by the believer, whose sins have been forgiven through faith, that they are not directly applicable to the problem of salvation. Psalm 24 is particularly enlightening in this respect:

Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
(24,3-5.)

Up to this point this passage closely parallels Psalm 15.

However, the very next verse tells who these people are, whose hands are clean, and whence they have "a pure heart".

This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O (God of) Jacob. (24,6.)

We need not argue long on this point however, The fact of the matter is, that, were salvation dependent upon man's works, there simply would be no salvation: for it is

impossible for man to save himself.¹⁹

...none can keep alive his own soul. (22,29.)

Man has no more power over his spiritual life than his physical existence. Any man who is at all aware of his spiritual condition must cry with David, "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me!" (38,4.) And with the Messiah he must cry, "Innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me." (40,12.) In such a state of total helplessness he then rests his hope on God alone: "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." (40,17; 70,5.)

Those who make works a means of man's salvation conceive of righteousness as a matter of external works. The Psalms, on the other hand, repeatedly emphasize that righteousness is a condition of the heart.

... the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.
My defence is of God, which saveth the upright
in heart. (7,9b-10.)

Behold, thou desireth truth in the inward parts:
and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. (51,6. cf. 11,2; 26,2; 139, 23-24.)

Without this righteousness of the heart, which man receives from God by faith, even the sacrifices are useless.

For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it:

19. Cf. Chap. II, on Man's Depravity.)

thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise....

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar. (51,16.17.19.)

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God. (69,30-32.)

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. (4,5. cf. 40,6.)

Even the damnation of the wicked bears testimony to the truth, that man is saved by faith alone. Although the wicked are judged according to, and damned on account of, their works, the primary charge against them appears repeatedly to be their unbelief, their rejection of God. All their wickedness flows from this source.

The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. (36,1.)

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. (9,17.)

Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord. (14,4; 53,4. cf. 10,4; 54,3; 86,14.)

Finally, all the passages quoted before in proof of man's total depravity, of salvation by grace, of the forgiveness of sin, of salvation through faith, all these stand as added evidence that the Davidic Psalms teach salvation by the grace of God alone, through faith alone, without works of any kind. Work-righteousness could hardly be more effectively, more emphatically excluded.

Possessing the righteousness of faith, man can now appeal to his own righteousness for salvation; for the righteousness of faith makes works of righteousness possible on the part of man.

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee. (25,21.)

Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.

Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth....

I will wash mine hands in innocency:....

But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me. (26,1-3. 6a,11.)

The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me. (7,8.)

The righteousness of faith also makes the imperfect works of man acceptable in the sight of God.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. (19,14.)

C. The Messiah

As we have indicated²⁰ the picture of man's salvation is not complete until we find the answer to the question, "How can God forgive sin without violating His holiness?" The answer, of course, is in the work of the Messiah. By this expression of hopeful longing for a "salvation out of Zion", David shows that he was fully aware of this missing factor in the salvation plan, and that he looked to the Messiah to supply it.

20. Cf. footnote 17, p. 31.

Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. (14,7: 53,6.)

For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession. (69,35.)

The context in both of these passages shows that the salvation referred to is salvation from sin.

No passage in the Davidic Psalms tells us clearly and directly who the Messiah is to be. That a distinct person is meant is evident in most of the passages dealing with His work and office. The Messiah is clearly identified with God.

... the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people,..... (14,7.)

For God will save Zion,..... (69,35. cf. 68,18-20.)

Every passage, in fact, which depicts the Messiah as the Savior of Israel, identifies Him with God. This is consistent with our whole previous discussion of salvation as wrought by God alone. That the Messiah is also man is evident in all the passages which depict His sufferings. Only God can save; only man can suffer. The Messiah is to save by suffering. He must then be both God and man.

It must be granted that this is, however, pure deduction. It is valid in the light of the New Testament, of course, but questionable on the basis of the Psalms alone; for in the Psalms the Messiah as sufferer is not clearly identified with the Messiah as Savior or as King.

The incarnation of the Messiah is taught in Psalm 40,6., provided that the Septugint translation, confirmed in

Hebrews 10,5. is accepted as the correct reading. Psalm 40,6 contains the phrase, "Mine ears hast thou opened (digged, bored through)"; in the Hebrew, "פָּתַחְתָּ אָזְנוֹי לִי"; The Septuagint rendering is *οὐκ ἔκτισέν μοι*, quoted thus in Hebrews 10,5. and translated, "but a body hast thou prepared me". If this is what David wrote, he evidently had a clear picture of the Messiah made flesh. The difficulty can be resolved only by assuming a corruption in the Hebrew text, a rather precarious procedure.²¹

The Messiah was to do the will of God. Psalm 40,5-12 describes that will. It is in the first place, a will rich in grace toward man.

Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. (40,5.)

We note secondly, that, this will of God did not find its ultimate fulfilment in the various sacrifices of the Old Testament.

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened (or, a body hast thou prepared): burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. (40,6.)

The will of God, described already in the Pentateuch, is that the Messiah should come and do a certain work. The Messiah joyfully carries out the will and instruction of God.

Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the books it is written of me,
I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is

21. For a full discussion of this problem, with exegesis of both versions, see the Commentary of Adam Clarke, the Old Testament. Vol. III, p. 349f.)

within my heart. (40,7-8.)

The devotion of the Messiah to the will of God is described also in Psalm 69,9:

The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up:....

Just what was this task which God wanted the Messiah to perform? In the first place, it was a prophetic work, the preaching of the righteousness of faith, the Gospel of the grace of God.

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation. (40,9-10.)

See also Psalm 22, 22-23.25:

I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

In the second place, according to the will of God, the Messiah was to be a Priest.

The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (110,4.)

The primary duty of the priests of the Old Testament was to offer sacrifices. But as we have noted this was not God's purpose for the Messiah.

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire;.... (40,6.)

Wherein, then, lay the priesthood of the Messiah? It lay in His own suffering and death.

God Himself inflicted on the Messiah His sufferings.

Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face....

For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. (69,7.26.)

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shake their heads.

Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy.

That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it. (109,25-27.)

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,.... (8,5.)

My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. (22,15.)

The fearfulness of these sufferings is vividly described.²²

Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. (55,2-5.)

For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness. (109,22-24.)

The Messiah is forsaken by all men.

I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children....

Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. (69,8.20.)

Worst of all, even God has forsaken Him.

22. Psalms 22; 40; 41; 55; 69; 109.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.
(22,1-2.)

Many details of His passion, as described in the New Testament, are foretold in these Psalms. We shall list them.

The Betrayal:

For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company....

He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant.

The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

(55,12-14.20-21. cf. 41,9.)

**Condemnation
of Judas:**

And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. (109,5-9.)

Crucifixion:

... they pierced my hands and my feet. (22,16b.)

**Vinegar and
Gall:**

They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. (69,21.)

**Parting of
Garments:**

They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.
(22,18.)

Ridicule:

But I am a worm, and no man: a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,

He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

(22,6-8.)

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads. (109,25.)

Death and
Resurrection:

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Thou wilt shew me the path of life:

Exaltation:

in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (16,9-11.)

Ascension, Victory,
Continual Presence:

Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men: yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them. (68,18.)

Defeat of
enemies (men and
devils):

Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents....

Add iniquity unto their iniquity; and let them not come into thy righteousness.

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. (69,22-25. 27-28. cf. 40,14-15; 41,10-11; 109,29.)

What is the purpose of all this suffering? What is the relationship between the Messiah and the forgiveness of men's sins? In calling Him "Priest" (110,4.) God implies that He is a means by which the people receive forgiveness of sin. In saying that He is "priest for ever", God indicates that the sacrifice the Messiah offers has permanent value. True, the Psalms give no such clear explanation of this point as that in Hebrews 7; yet it is evident even in the Psalms that the Messiah died as sin-bearer for men.

The Primary evidence for this is the first part of Psalm 69. In verse 4 Messiah cries, "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty:...." This is clearly a protestation of innocence. But it is followed immediately in verse 5 by a confession of sin: "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee." The fearful sinfulness of the Messiah, the weight of the sin which he bore, is best depicted in Psalm 40, 12.

For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

Note that His bearing of sin here is part of the will of God, which Messiah delights to do. (40,8.) So great is the weight of this sin which He bears, that He is driven almost to despair.

Save me, O God; for the waters are come unto my soul.

I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing:
I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. (69,1-3.)

The explanation of the suffering under sin, which the innocent Messiah bears, appears in verses 4 and 9.

... then I restored that which I took not away.

The Messiah is paying back a debt which He did not incur.

... the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

The guilt and punishment of all the sins by which men have violated the holiness of God has fallen upon the shoulders of the Messiah. All this He bears in obedience to God.

Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. (69,7.)

Thus, through the sufferings and death of the Messiah, men who are ground into the dust by their sin, find peace and life.

The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. (22,26.)

Thus the captivity in which sin has held man, is broken, and God has delivered man from death.

Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them....

He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues (deliverance) from death. (68,18.20.)

Thus Zion is saved, the Kingdom of God, His church, is built.

For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of

Judah: that they may dwell therein. (69,35-36.)

And thus the message is proclaimed to all generations, that God has wrought righteousness for men.

They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this. (22,31.)

The prayers of the suffering Messiah for deliverance do not go unanswered.

For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard. (22,24.)

God will not "suffer his Holy One to see corruption", but raises Him to glory at His own right hand. L6,10-11.)

And now the Messiah, at the right hand of God, rules with an iron hand even His enemies.

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies....

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with dead bodies: he shall wound the heads over many countries. (110,1-2; 5-6. of. 68,21-24.)

Moreover he has dominion over all of creation.

For thou... hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

The fowl of the air, and fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea. (8,5-8.)

Messiah is not only a King of power, however; He is also King of grace, King of love to those who fear him.

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the LORD; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom is the LORD'S: he is governor among

the nations.

All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship:
all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him:....
(22,27-29.)

O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places:
the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and
power unto his people. Blessed be God. (68,34-35,
cf. 110,3-4; 24,3-6; 16,2-3.)

Finally, the Messiah reigns also as King of glory.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up,
ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come
in.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and might-
y, the LORD mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up
ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall
come in.

Who is this King of glory? the LORD of hosts, he is
the King of glory. Selah. (24,7-10.)

D. The Word of God

Man can know that Jehovah is a God of Grace, who forgives
man's sin through the work of the Messiah, only through
special revelation. We have seen in our discussion of the
Natural Knowledge of God, that man can read out of nature
the fact of the existence of God, and such attributes as His
majesty, power, glory, goodness is preserving life on earth,
and His justice. But a knowledge of God which "converts the
soul", "rejoices the heart", "enlightens the eyes", "makes
wise the simple", comes to man only through the "statutes of
the LORD", "the commandment of the LORD", "The law of the LORD",
"the testimony of the LORD". (19,7-8.)²³

23. Verses 1-6 of Psalm 19 deal with the natural know-
ledge of God; verses 7-11 with the knowledge of God revealed
in the Word.

When David speaks of the the commandment, statutes, testimony, law, or judgments of the LORD, he is referring to the Book in which Jehovah is revealed, or to passages or incidents recorded in that Book. How much of the Old Testament David had, we cannot know. It is certain that he had the Pentateuch, for his psalms contain many references to the history the laws, and the God it records. (68,7 ff; 103,7-8.)

When we speak here of the Word of God, we refer to the various means by which man acquires such knowledge of God, as he cannot acquire in nature. Such means are the reading of the recorded law, meditation of the law, the preaching of the law in its widest sense. This Word of God, in giving man knowledge of the way of salvation which he can gain in no other way, is the means by which the Grace of God is offered and applied to man.

In the Word, God is revealed as a God who forgives sin:

He hath made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy.

He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever. (103,7-9.)

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation. (40,9-10.)

In the written Word, the Messiah is revealed:

Then said I, LO, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.

I delight to do thy will, O my God:....(40,7-8a.)

Jehovah teaches sinners the way of salvation; in this

"Teaching" the means of the revealed Word is implied:

Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation: on thee do I wait all the day.

Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindness; for they have been ever of old....

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way. (25,4-6.8-9.)

When David here calls upon God to "remember" His "tender mercies", he is clearly referring to the promises of mercy revealed in the Law of Moses.

In giving man knowledge of the grace of God, the Word serves as the means by which sinners are turned back to God, led to repentance and faith.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. (51,13.)

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. (40,3.)

For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. (36,9.)

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. (27,8.)

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:.... (19,7a.)

And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee:.... (9,10.)

The law of God, as the revelation of His will, contains elements both of warning and of promise to the believer:

Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. (19,11.)

But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

To such as keep his covenant and to those that remember his commandments to do them. (103,17-18.)

The law serves as a guide to man in sanctification:

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talked of judgment.

The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. (37,30-31.)

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye. (32,8.)

Teach me thy way, O LORD: I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. (86,11.)

Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness. (143,10.)

For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from iniquity. (18,22-23.)

Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. (17,4.)

God's Word is unalterably certain and true, for the faithfulness and truth of God stands behind His law and promises.

The law of the LORD is perfect... the testimony of the LORD is sure,....

The statutes of the LORD are right,... the commandment of the LORD is pure,....

The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. (19,7-9.)

As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him. (18,30.)

The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. (12,6-7.)

The believer realizes that it is through the Word of God that he knows God and His salvation. Therefore he praises that Word highly:

In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me....

In God will I praise his word; in the LORD will I praise his word. (56,4.10.)

The believer longs to hear God's Word:

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. (19,10.)

Out of this longing grows the believer's love for God's house. Here he can hear the Word of God proclaimed, and worship God for His grace.

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou has magnified thy word above all thy name....

All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. (138,2.4.)

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together;

Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel (i.e., the place where the Word is preached), to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. (122,1-4.)

One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple. (27,4.)

I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. (61,4.)

LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. (26,8.)

In the "great congregation", the assembly of Israel, the Word of God was proclaimed, and His praises sung.

I will give thee thanks in the great congregation:
I will praise thee among much people. (35,18.)

I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the
midst of the congregation will I praise thee....
My praise shall be of thee in the great congrega-
tion:.... (22,22.25.)

I have preached righteousness in the great congrega-
tion:....

... I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and
thy truth from the great congregation. (40,9-10.)

Every believer, out of the joy of his salvation, preaches
the Word of salvation to others.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and up-
hold me with thy free spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and
sinners shall be converted unto thee. (51,12-13.)

They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness
unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done
this. (22,31; 26,7.)

E. The Extent of Salvation

Since David is king, Psalmist, and religious teacher of
Israel, it is to be expected that his chief interest should be
in the salvation of his own people.

... let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends
of the earth. (59,13b.)

Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and
for ever. (131,3.)

Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over
Israel....

... the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and
power unto his people... (68,34-36.)

Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. (25,22.)

However, Jehovah is not the God of Israel alone. He is God
over all the earth.

They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens:.... (65, 8.)

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and let thy glory be above all the earth. (57,11.)

The wrath of Jehovah extends over all nations.

Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me. (60,8.)

Thou, therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors....

Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. (59,5.13.)

From the universality of Jehovah's rule, from the universality of His wrath over sin, and from the attribute of his changelessness, we may conclude that His grace, if it applies to Israel, extends equally over all the earth. This is indicated also by many passages which speak of all nations as yet turning to Him.

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations.

All they that be fat upon the earth (i.e. the rich) shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust (i.e., the poor) shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul. (22,27-29.)

By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea;.... (65,5.)

Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord;.... (68,31-32.)

All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. (86,9.)

All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD,
when they hear the words of thy mouth.

Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for
great is the glory of the LORD. (138, 4-5.)

F. Election

God has in eternity chosen, set apart, or anointed,
certain people as His own.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest
to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts:
.... (65,4.)

But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is
godly for himself:.... (4,4.)

God brings the man He has chosen to faith.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest
to approach unto thee,.... (65,4.)

The man whose sins have been forgiven knows that he has
been thus chosen by God.

Iniquities prevail against me: as for our trans-
gressions, thou shalt purge them away.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest,.... (65,3.4.)

The man who is thus chosen, knows also that God will answer
his prayers.

But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is
godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto
him. (4,3.)

The whole life of the elect, all his trials and problems,
are recorded by God already in eternity.

Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears
into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? (56,8.)

God delivers His elect, His anointed, in all their afflict-
ions.

Now I know that the LORD saveth his anointed: he
will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving
strength of his right hand. (20,6.)

God strengthens His anointed, blesses them, nourishes them,
and finally takes them to Himself.

The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving
strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance:
feed them also, and lift them up for ever. (28,8-9.)

IV. Sanctification

A. The Nature of Sanctification

In our discussion of the relationship between faith and works (III,B.), we have seen that the Psalms teach salvation by faith alone, without works. To understand the role of sanctification in the picture of David's theology, it is necessary to cover some of the same ground, this time, however, from the point of view of works. If works are not the means of man's salvation, what is their relation to faith?

Faith and works are intimately related in the Psalms. They are often mentioned in one breath, almost as though both are equally necessary.

Wait on the LORD (faith), and keep his way (works), and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land:....
(37,34.)

Trust in the LORD (faith), and do good (works); so shalt thou dwell in the land,.... (37,3.)

Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity (works): I have trusted also in the LORD (faith); therefore I shall not slide. (26,1.)

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness (works), and put your trust in the LORD (faith). (4,5.)

Works are, indeed, important and necessary. However, they are never spoken of as working salvation, separately from faith. It is true that certain passages speak of works without even mentioning faith; even in these, however, the spirit of faith is present, for the writer, by his very mention of Jehovah, shows that he trusts in him. Faith is thus

presupposed.²⁴

The fact of the matter is that faith is fundamental to all good works. No works are good without it. Only man in whom God has created a "clean heart" and renewed a "Right spirit", only he can offer "sacrifices of righteousness" with which Jehovah is pleased. (51,10.19.) Faith is never without good works, however. Those that "fear" the LORD, are the ones who "keep his covenant, and ... remember his commandments to do them." (103,17-18.) The Shepherd who "restoreth my soul" also "leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake". (23,3.) The man that "feareth the LORD, him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose". (25,12.) "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk", the Psalmist prays God, and the ground of his prayer is "for in thee do I trust: ... for I lift up my soul unto thee". (143,8.) Again, "Teach me to do thy will: for thou art my God (faith):...." (143,10.) This relationship is brought out in Psalm 34, 11-14, where the Psalmist teaches children what "the fear of the LORD" is:

Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Sanctification goes much deeper than purely external works. It is a condition and attitude of the heart. If

24. Cf. Psalm 18, 19-24; 37,27-28; 15.

there is no purity of heart, there is no purity at all.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands and a pure heart:...
(24,3-4.)

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.
(17,3.)

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talked of judgment.

The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. (37,30-31.)

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way of everlasting. (139,23-24.)

Only on account of the righteousness which God imputes to him through faith, can the Psalmist appeal to God to search his heart, as he does in the latter passage. David recognizes the fact that his own righteousness is far from perfect. His works are tainted with sin; yet they are acceptable to God, because God is his redeemer.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.
(37,23-24.)

Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be right, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. (19,12-14.)

Since the unbeliever does not have "a clean heart" and "a right spirit" (51,10.), he cannot do works that are

pleasing to God;"... there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (14,3b.)²⁵

It is clear, then that sanctification cannot originate in man. Holiness of life is wrought in man by God, just as faith is, and together with faith. It is God who teaches the believer now to live in conformity with His will, and give him the strength to do so.

Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. (17,5.)

For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living? (56,13.)

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. (32,8.)

Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face. (5,8.)

Though it is God who works such sanctification in the believer, the holy life and the good works that result are distinctly the life and works of the believer. Once a new heart has been created in him, he delights to do the will of God. (40,8.) Man can do nothing to contribute to his salvation. But when salvation is his through faith, he can and does cooperate with God in sanctification of life.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways;....

O LORD, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. (51,10.13.15.)

I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O

25. Cf. Chap. II, A, the discussion of the effect of depravity on man, pp. 16-20.

when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. (101,2.)

For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from iniquity. (18,21-23)

B. The Manifestation of Sanctification

The primary evidence and external manifestation of the change that has taken place in the believer's heart, is his complete trust in and surrender to Jehovah. His whole life is wrapped up in God; his troubles are in God's hands.

Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth....

But I trusted in thee, O LORD I said, Thou art my God.

My times are in thy hand:.... (31,5.14-15.)

I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. (16,8.)

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou LORD, only makest me dwell in safety. (4,8.)

Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the LORD: trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass....

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him:.... (37,4-5.7.)

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. (55,22.)

With such trust in Jehovah, the believer has no fear, even though great dangers threaten him.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me....

When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me. (56,3-4.9.)

I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. (3,5-6.)

The LORD is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?....

Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.....

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say on the LORD. (27,1.3.14.)

Even fear of death is overcome by trust in Jehovah and in His mercy.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (23,4.)

Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. (63,3.)

We have mentioned trust as the primary manifestation of the believer's new life in Jehovah, because it is this which clearly and positively distinguishes him from the unbeliever, even in the eyes of the world. His "clean heart" and "right spirit" are evident now also in his hatred of sin. Every appeal for forgiveness, every passage which describes torment of conscience, every prayer to God to "teach me to do thy will" (143,10.), is evidence of the believer's yearning to overcome sin in his own life. The believer no longer seeks the company of sinners, but hates them, and will have nothing to do with them.

I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked. (26,4-5.)

I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer....

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. (101,3-5.7.)

It is not necessary here to go into great detail depicting individual sins, which the believer seeks to overcome in his own life. The passages quoted below explain themselves.

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. (34,13.)

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath:.... (37,8.)

Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart on them. (62,10.)

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?...

... he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent.... (15,1.4-5.)

Blessed is he that considereth the poor:.... (41,1.)

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. (131,1.)

Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head; for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities. (141,5.)

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! (133,1.)

We have seen that sanctification is manifest first of all in the believer's total trust in God, and secondly, in his hatred of sin, and his desire to overcome sin in

his own life. A third manifestation of the clean heart of the believer is his joy. Because of the salvation God has wrought for him, his life is full of rejoicing.

And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation. (35,9.)

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;...
Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. (51,12-14.)

The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!....

For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance. (21,1.6.)

Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. (4,7.)

The believer cannot help but rejoice over the relief that comes to his conscience and in the assurance that his sins are forgiven.

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning....

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee forever. (30,5.11-12.)

Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. (51,8.)

Joy is the peculiar possession of the righteous, of those who put their trust in Jehovah.

But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. (68,3.)

Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart. (32,11.)

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. (5,11.)

I have set the LORD always before me:;because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth:
.... (16,9-9a.)

The joy in the heart of the believer cannot remain silent but inevitably bursts forth into praise and thanksgiving to God.

... my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.
(63,5h.)

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.
(28.7.)

And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. (27,6.)

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified. (40,16.)

But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him. (68,3-4.)

The Psalms are full of praises to God. They praise God for His salvation (cf. 40,16, and 27,6, above; also 30,1.11-12; 9,14.); for His mercy, (63,3; 138,2.); for His power and majesty (cf. 68,4. above, also 59,16-17.); and for His marvelous works (139,14; 26,7.). All God's works (69,34; 145, 10, 103,22.), the angels (103,20-21.), all nations (86,9; 138,4-5; 145,21.), and each individual believer (103,1.22;

145,10.), all are to sing praises to God.

The praise which the believer's heart pours out to God serves as a means of proclaiming His grace, and of spreading the truth of His salvation abroad.

I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea
I will praise him among the multitude. (109,30.)

I will give thee thanks in the great congregation:
I will praise thee among much people. (35,18.)

One generation shall praise thy works to another, and
shall declare thy mighty acts. (145,4.)

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold
me with thy free spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners
shall be converted unto thee. (51,12-13.)

Finally, the change that has taken place in the heart of
the man who looks in faith to Jehovah as his Redeemer, is
manifest in his prayer. Only the righteous can call upon God
in prayer, and hope for an answer.

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his
ears are open unto their cry....

The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and deliver-
eth them out of all their troubles. (34,15.17.)

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee
in a time when thou mayest be found:.... (32,6a.)

... and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for
I am thy servant. (143,12b.)

If the wicked pray, their prayer is vain and even sinful.

They cried, but there was none to save them: even
unto the LORD, but he answered them not. (18,41.)

... let this prayer become sin. (109,7b.)

The foundation of prayer is faith and trust in God.

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him,
to all that call upon him in truth.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he

also will hear their cry, and will save them. (145,19-20.)

Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. (37,5.)

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. (62,8.)

When the believer prays, he is certain that God will hear and answer his prayer.

But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him. (4,3.)

Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand. (20,6.)

When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me. (56,9.)

I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. (57,2.)

This confidence in God, and certainty of being heard, rests upon God's mercy and His faithfulness.

But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation....

Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. (69,13.16.)

For thou LORD, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee... (86,5.)

Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. (143,1.)

The Psalmist is persistent in his prayer.

As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice. (55,16-17.)

Be merciful unto me, O LORD: for I cry unto thee daily. (86,3.)

God may delay in answering prayer, but He always does answer.

For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee. (31,22.)

The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;

Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;

Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfill all thy counsel. (20,1-4.)

Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

For thou preventest (i.e., anticipatest) him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even the length of days for ever and ever. (21,2-4.)

So surely does God hear and answer prayer, that his becomes a name by which He is known.

O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. (65,2.)

Thus the implicit trust with which the believer commits himself to God, his hatred of sin, his joy over his salvation, his songs of praise to God, and his life of prayer, are evidence that God has created a clean heart and renewed a right spirit within him.

C. Problems or Afflictions in the Believer's Life

In spite of the fact that his heart is full of joy, praise, and confidence in God, the believer does not live a life of perfect bliss. He is repeatedly troubled by problems and afflictions of various kind.

These afflictions are sent by God.

O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.

Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment. (60,1-3.)

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.

Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. (39,9-10.)

God send many afflictions upon the righteous.

My life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing;.... (31,10.)

Many are the afflictions of the righteous:.... (34,19.)

God uses such afflictions to correct his children.

When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth:.... (39,11.)

He uses them also to keep His people faithful to him.

Slay them (i.e., mine enemies) not, lest my people forget:.... (59,11.)

It is difficult to determine just what was the nature of the afflictions of the Psalmist. They are described generally in terms of "enemies". It is hardly likely that all the passages on David's enemies are meant literally, as referring to persons or nations which hate him. David seems rather to use the term "enemy" as a favorite figure of speech, in describing any trial or affliction of body or soul. In some cases the enemy is almost certainly the devil, who has led David into sin, and at whose hand he suffers intense torment of conscience. (Cf. Psalms 6; 38; 142; 143; 25; 13.) Again, the enemy may be a wicked individual who by his treachery brings trouble and affliction upon the king.

(Cf. Psalms 41; 55; 109; 140.) In a few cases the enemies appear to be hostile nations. (Psalms 18; 60; 124.) Whatever these enemies of David were, they caused him a great deal of trial and torment.

The believer reacts in various ways to his afflictions and trials. He may question the justice of God, by comparing his plight with the prosperity of the wicked.

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. (37,1.)

But such prosperity is only temporary and is in no way to be coveted.

For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb....

A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked....

I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him but he could not be found.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. (37,2.16.35-37.)

In a few cases, the believer calls upon God for deliverance on the ground that he is innocent of any transgression.

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD.

They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold. (59,3-4.)

O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me;

Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it;....

Arise O LORD, in thine anger,... and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded. (7,3-6.)

Usually, however, the believer sees in his affliction the righteous displeasure of God.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. (6,1.)

O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again. (60,1.)

He feels that God has forsaken him.

How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? (13,1.)

Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; let me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. (27,9.)

Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. (38,21.)

He is reminded of his sin.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sin. (25,17-18.)

With the remembrance of his sin comes also torment of conscience.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. (38,1-3.)

He longs for escape.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

And I said, O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest. (55,5-8.)

No man can help him in his trouble; he puts all his trust in God.

Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man.

Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. (60,11-12.)

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. (20,7.)

I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.

The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praise: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. (18,1-3.)

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence, I shall not be moved.

In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Surely men of low degree, are vanity and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. (62,5-9.)

God is fully aware of the troubles and afflictions of His saints.

... thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities. (31,7.)

Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. (38,9.)

When my spirit was overwhelmed with me, then thou knewest my path.... (142,3.)

He is full of mercy toward them in their troubles.

But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me....

Help me, O LORD my God: O Save me according to thy mercy. (109,21.26.)

Shew forth thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. (17,7.)

All affliction is temporary and inconsequential compared with His grace.

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour
is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh
in the morning. (30,5.)

No matter how severe the affliction, the Lord delivers His
servants when they cry to Him:

I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me
up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed
me. (30,1-2.)

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt re-
vive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the
wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.
(138,7.)

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side,
now may Israel say;

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when
men rose up against us:

Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath
was kindled against us:....

Blessed be the LORD who hath not given us as a prey to
their teeth:....

Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven
and earth. (124,1-3.6.8.)

God uses means, at times at least, to deliver men from
their afflictions. One such means is the intervention of
"the angel of the LORD".

Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek
after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to
confusion that devise my hurt.

Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the
angel of the LORD chase them.

Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel
of the LORD persecute them. (35,4-6.)

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that
fear him, and delivereth them. (34,7.)

God also uses the strength of man in effecting man's deliver-
ance from the enemies.

Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my
hands to war, and my fingers to fight:

My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my

deliverer, my shield, and he is whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me. (144,1-2.)

But thou, O LORD be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them. (41,10.)

D. The Absence of the Concept of Love in Sanctification

The core around which the life of the believer revolves, according to the Psalms, is not love, as in the New Testament, but rather the idea of justice and morality. This does not mean that love does not exist between men and men, and between men and God. With the clear picture the Psalmist portrays of a God of unlimited, but undeserved grace, it is inevitable that the believer should love God and love his fellow men. The love of the believer for God is clearly indicated.

... let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. (5,11.)

O love the LORD, all ye his saints:.... (31,23.)

The LORD preserveth all them that love him:.... (145,20.)

The believer loves his salvation (40,16; 70,4.); he loves the house of God in which the Word of that salvation is preached.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house,.... (26,8.)

Love of man for man, however, is mentioned in Psalm 109,4-5:

For my love they are my adversaries:....

And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Here, however, the emphasis is not on the love of the believer for his adversaries, but on their injustice in rewarding evil for good.

The central idea in the relationship of man to man is not so much love as justice and fairness.

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?....

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reporach against his neighbor....

He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent.... (15,1.3.5.)

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. (41,1.)

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will I not suffer.

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. (101,5-6.)

David clearly patterns his relations to men after this picture of the perfect justice of God. Compare the latter passage with Psalm 18, 25-26:

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful;

with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright:

With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward, thou wilt shew thyself froward.²⁶

How great a difference in actual holiness of life this divergence in the concept of sanctification would make, cannot be judged. Since love cannot be absent in the heart of any man who has known the love of God for him, it is possible that either, when really carried out in true faith, would lead to the same goal. Yet the juridical character of the Old Testament sanctification, as pictured also in the Psalms could be more easily abused, as it clearly had been in the

26. Cf. in this connection God's justice, Chap. I, C. pp. 9-10.

time of Christ. In any case, Christ's "new commandment" to love one another, was really new in the Jewish way of looking at life.

E. The Problem of Vengeance.

Seemingly in direct contradiction to the Christian conception of love for all men, including enemies, are the repeated cries of the Psalmist to God for the bitterest kind of vengeance on his enemies.

And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul:..... (143,12.)

Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell:..... (55,15.)

Thou, therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. (59,5.)

Some of the bitterest imprecations are uttered by the Messiah.

Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake,

Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents....

Add iniquity unto their iniquity; and let them not come into thy righteousness.

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. (69,22-25.27-28.)

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin.

Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let

the strangers spoil his labour.

Let there be none to extend mercy unto him; neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. (109,6-14.)

More than this, the righteous apparently views such destruction of the wicked almost with sadistic joy.

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. (58,10.)

That the boot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same. (68,23.)

God shall likewise destroy thee for ever,....

The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him: (52,5-6.)

... and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies. (54,7.)

What shall the believer of the New Testament, who desires the damnation of no one, say of all this? What shall he say, who sees in the destruction of the wicked, cause only for deepest sorrow?

It is clear, in the first place, that the destruction of the wicked is fully deserved. The wicked are full of sin.

Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. (109,16-17.)

But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful man shall not live out half their days;.... (55,23.)

The wicked have sinned against the righteous, and constantly

oppressed them.

For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them....

He shall reward evil unto mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth. (54,3.5.)

Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt....

For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.... (38,4.7. cf. the entire Psalm)

Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous. (31,18.)

Most serious of all, the wicked have sinned against God.

Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up. (28,4-5.)

Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels: cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions: for they have rebelled against thee. (5,10.)

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. (9,17.)

Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee....

For they intended evil against thee:.... (21,8.11.)

Whatever punishment the Psalmist demands, and whatever punishment God inflicts on the wicked, is richly deserved.

The Psalms point out in the second place, that the destruction of the wicked serves as a warning to men, to drive fear into their hearts, and thus turn them to God.

But God shall shoot at them with an arrow: suddenly shall they be wounded.

... all that see them shall flee away.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. (64,7-9.)

Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. (59,13.)

Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail; let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

Put them in fear, O LORD: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. (9,19-20.)

So that a man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth. (58,11.)

Granting all this, the problem of David's apparent hatred of his enemies still remains. David explains that hatred in Psalm 139, 20-22:

For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.

Do not I hate them O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

I hate them with a perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

That this hatred is in no way sinful is indicated in the verses following:

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.

And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (139,23-24.)

The hatred of the Psalmist then, is not a personal hatred, but a righteous indignation against the enemies of his God. The life of David, as recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel, confirms this. In spite of his persecution at the hands of Saul, David did not hate the King, but highly respected him as the anointed of God. Even when he had opportunity to kill him and make himself king, David refused to do so. When Saul had died in battle, and the Amalekite came to David, claiming for himself the honor of having killed Saul, David had him

put to death. (2 Samuel 1.) Clearly, then, David was not a man of hatred, even of his enemies.

In spite of this, the believer of the New Testament would like to see in the Psalms a prayer or plea to God, not for the destruction, but for the salvation of the wicked. There is none such. This may be due to the legalistic character of Old Testament sanctification, discussed in the previous section. (Chapter IV, D.) We can, however, point out two further considerations. In the first place, we have seen (Chapter IV, C.) we do not know who the enemies of David really are. Against his spiritual enemies we would certainly join him in calling down God's wrath. Furthermore, as an inspired writer, David knew which of his enemies and of the wicked were hardened in sin. There would be no purpose in praying for the conversion of these. Thus, without lack of knowledge regarding the identity of these enemies, we dare not pass final judgment. In the second place, not all of David's cries for vengeance are uttered unconditionally. David clearly allows for the possibility of repentance and conversion in at least two passages.

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

If he turn not, he will whet his sword;
(7,11-12.)

But God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such as one as goeth on still in his trespasses. (68,21.)

This condition may be implied also in other passages on vengeance.

The cries for the destruction of the wicked in the Psalms are the severest type of law preaching against the impenitent.

V. Eschatology

A. God's Judgment on Mankind

The throne of God is always a throne of righteous judgment.

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. (7,11.)

The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. (11,4.)

This continuous judgment between the righteous and the wicked is really His rulership over the world for the benefit of His people.

The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace. (29,10-11.)

... a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth. (58,11.)

The Psalmist, however, speaks also of a special "day of wrath", in which Messiah, sitting at Jehovah's right hand, will judge, convict, and destroy His enemies.

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool....

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. (110,1.5-6.)

In most passages dealing with the judgment, the emphasis seems to be on some immediate punishment or vindication of an

individual or a group of individuals. Nevertheless, even in these, the idea of a final and complete judgment of the wicked and vindication of the righteous is not lost.

For thou hast maintained my right and my cause;
thou satest in the throne judging right....
But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared
his throne for judgment.
And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he
shall minister judgment to his people in uprightness.
(9,4.7-8.)

Temporal, daily judgments, are a picture of the great judgment to come, and the characteristics of the lesser can be applied also to the greater.

No man, not even kings, can escape the judgment of God.

God renders "to every man according to his work".

(62,12.) "He shall judge the world in righteousness."

(9,8.)

The latter passage, (9,8.) tells us also that the standard of judgment will be God's "righteousness". It could not be otherwise, of course, for He is a righteous and holy God: "For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness:...."
(11,7a.)

Psalms 62, 11-22, shows that God will judge in power (with respect to the wicked) and in mercy (with respect to the believers); also, that the basis upon which men will be judged is their works:

God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this; that
power becometh unto God.

Also unto thee, O LORD, becometh mercy: for
thou renderest to every man according to his work.

That men will be judged according to their works is evident also elsewhere:

Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert. (28,4.)

The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands nath he recompensed me. (18,20.)

If men stood before the throne of God's righteousness displaying only their perfection, no man on earth would be saved.

And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. (143,2.)

As we have seen, the chapter on grace, however, God has wrought a perfect righteousness for men in the Messiah, and men appropriate this for themselves by faith. Those who have such faith are righteous, the servants of God. They have no fear of God's judgment.

The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.

O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just for the righteous God trieth the hearts and the reins.

My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. (7,8-10.)

God looks upon the righteous with favor (11,7.), and rewards them (58,11.). The wicked, however, will be destroyed.

The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy. (145,20.)

The wicked will not inherit life with the righteous.

Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness.

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. (69,27-28.)

B. The Resurrection of the Body

The Messiah will rise from the dead, and in His own body.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory (i.e., my soul) rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope (i.e., in safety in death.).

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (i.e., in death); neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption (i.e., to rot in the grave).

Thou wilt shew me the path of life (i.e., bring me back to life); in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (16,9-11.)

From the resurrection of the Messiah, we conclude also that all believers shall rise thus to eternal life.²⁷ The resurrection of the believers is confirmed in all the passages which speak of their eternal life,²⁸ and is specifically stated in Psalm 17, 15:

... I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

We cannot, on the basis of these Psalms alone, establish the resurrection of the wicked. Certain passages seem to teach their annihilation.

Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be:..... (59,13.)

For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be:....

Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, and he could not be found. (37,10.36.)

These passages, however, refer to annihilation as far as existence on earth is concerned. That such annihilation is a horrible prospect is indicated in Psalm 39,13:

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go

27. Cf. I Cor. 15.

28. Cf. Chap. V., D, Heaven, Page 88.

hence, and be no more.

Since the whole life of the unbeliever is wrapped up in this world and not in God, the complete abolition of his earthly existence leaves him with no hope, and is therefore a fit picture of the horror of his eternal destruction.

C. Hell

Hell means separation from God. Whereas the righteous find fulness of joy in God's presence (16,11.), "the wicked perish at the presence of God". (68,2.) This reaction of the righteous or of the wicked to the presence of God is the difference between heaven and hell. The Messiah suffered hell for man, when He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (22.1.).

Hell is the punishment for rejection of God through sin and unbelief.

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. (9,17.)

It is a place of severe and perpetual torment.

Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever. (9,5.)

God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. (52,5.)

Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again. (140,10.)

Upon the wicked he shall rain shares, fire and brimstone: this shall be the portion of their cup. (11,6.)

Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them. (21,8-9.)

The believer regards hell, with its separation from God, as the worst of all evils.

... be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit. (28,1.)

... hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them, that go down into the pit. (143,7.)

He praises God for his deliverance.

I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. (86,13.)

I will extol thee, O LORD: ...

O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. (30,1.3.)

D. Heaven

Heaven is the goal toward which the believer looks with longing, and upon which he rests his hope.

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. (27,13.)

God in mercy preserves the believer in faith to the end, in order to bring him to that goal, to the completion of his salvation in heaven.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (23,6.)

The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: (138,8.)

For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever. (37,28.)

He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy

and truth, which may preserve him. (61,7.)

Heaven is life in the presence of God.

... in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (16,11.)

... I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. (23,6.)

And as for me, thou...settest me before thy face for ever. (41,12.)

... wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living? (56,13.)

He shall abide before God for ever:.... (61,7.)

... the upright shall dwell in thy presence.. (140,13.)

Heaven is eternal life.

... for there (i.e., upon the mountains of Zion) the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. (133.3.)

... lead me in the way everlasting. (139,24.)

The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. (37,18. cf. 16,11; 23,6. 41, 12 above.)

This life in the presence of God brings peace.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. (37,37.)

In heaven man receives perfect righteousness in the restoration of the image of God's holiness and perfect contentment and satisfaction.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. (17,15.)

Finally, heaven means the end of all sorrow, and a life of perfect, eternal joy, forever.

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (16,11.)

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